3

A WHIP FOR THE LECTURERS OF LEWIS,

And for all thoſe PRESBYTERIANS, and others of the CLERGY which maintain that damnable opinion of *abſolute Reprobation*, according to the ſenſe of the within written paper.

With an exact Copy of two ſeveral Letters ſent unto the ſaid Lecturers, wherein the Author deſires ſatisfaction concerning the ſaid opinion, with an Anſwer to one of the ſaid Letters, being a true Copy alſo.

By EDWARD CHOUNE of *Kingſton-Bowſey*, in the County of *SUSSEX*.

LONDON,
Printed for the Author, and are to be ſold at Mr *Richard Dodſons* ſhop, a Goldſmith at *Lewis*, near the Market-houſe, in *Suſſex*. 1657.

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To all Christian people, but especially unto all those that live under the Ministery of a parcell of Jugling Priests, being many of them LECTURERS of LEWIS in the County of SUSSEX; Mr *Pickering* of *Lewis*, and Mr *Newton* of *Kingston-Bowsey*, being two of them.

Good Christian,

ALthough I am no scholar to brangle in a sophistical way, with some Ministers which maintain that blasphemous opinion of absolute reprobation, *but blessed be God, there are very many Ministers which are very well able to encounter them, and well known to be better scholars then themselves; yet by the mercies of God, and education of my Parents, I have been trained up in such a measure of learning, as hath enabled me to understand plain English. I was* 39 *years of age before I did think there could be such a horrid opinion, as* absolute reprobation *harboured amongst Christians; and do believe, for ought I know, I might have lived* 39 *years longer, before I should have needed to have troubled my thoughts with such a whimsey, had not Mr* Newton *the Minister of my Parish, about two years and a half since, plaid the fool in making of it a pulpit story in these very words following:*

I would have you enquire of God Almighty, whether he had passed his decree of reprobation against you, or no; in case he had, he was just, no hope of recovery.

Which bloody inquisition did so set me in a fire, that I have many times laboured with the said Mr Newton, *and many other Divines whose judgments were for it, and against it, to be well satisfied; since which time, I thank my*

God, I have ſtudied the Scriptures more then formerly; I have alſo enquired into mens works on both ſides, and at this preſent I do find my ſelf in ſuch a happy condition, that the wit of man by Scripture and reaſon is not able to quench that fire which was firſt kindled in me, as aforeſaid; and I do new think it is not poſſible for me to do God greater ſervice, then by revealing this ſort of people in all places, and upon all occaſions, with the higheſt expreſſions that is poſſible for the wit of man to invent.

This written paper, thou mayeſt call it what thou pleaſeſt, it being a buſineſs of high concernment, in reſpect of mens ſalvation; my deſire is, that thou wouldſt read it twice over before thou paſs thy cenſure; if thou doeſt approve of it, I have my deſire: and thou mayeſt do well to acquaint thy neighbours and relations in what manner we are led by the noſe with ſuch a jugling Miniſtery; and if thou doeſt not approve of it, but doeſt think I have offended the Laws of God and man, thou mayeſt do well to acquaint Authority with theſe my actions, for I deſire no favour; for the Miniſters about Lewis *are ſuch dunces that they dare not come upon the ſtage; I have often dared them unto it, and not one of them dares to engage, therefore let the world judge if their cauſe doth not ſtink in the noſtrils of God and man, upon ſeveral conſiderations more, both in reſpect of th' glory of God, and mens eternal welfare, I can give when I am thereunto called. I am now reſolved to make them aſhamed of their private damnable erroneous opinion, or elſe they ſhall make me aſhamed of my raſhneſs, if there hath been any in me: Thus leaving all unto your Chriſtian conſideration, I remaine,*

Yours in Chriſt Jeſus,
EDWARD CHOUNE.

Kingſton-Bowſey,
April 15. 1657.

A Copy of the LETTER *ſent unto the* LECTURERS *of* LEWIS.

Gentlemen,

NOtwithſtanding what I have formerly writ unto Mr *Pickering* and Mr *Newton*, and to ſome others of the Lecturers of *Brighthelmeſton* concerning an opinion they maintain, I will alſo make bold to give you a particular of it; doubtleſs it is a ſubject of high concernment in reſpect of mens ſalvation, but yet being queſtion'd by ſuch a man as my ſelf, who am no ſcholar, I know it diſreliſheth with many; but conſidering the cenſure of men cannot be greater againſt me for writing the opinion of others, then it is againſt many Miniſters who preach other mens works *verbatim*; and againſt all Miniſters who preach nothing but was taught before they were borne; and doubtleſs thoſe which own this opinion, for the moſt part of their preaching is nothing but a parcell of non-ſenſe, therefore I care leſs for their cenſures.

Now I will ſtate the buſineſs in difference betwixt us, in as brief a way as I can, hoping I may receive ſome ſatisfaction, which is more then ever I could do from them in the leaſt degree.

About

About one year and an half ſince, Mr *Newton* the Miniſter of my Pariſh delivered in his pulpit, *How that all of us ſhould enquire of God whether he had paſſed his decree of Reprobation againſt us or no, in caſe he had, he was juſt, and no hopes of recovery.*

This confounded doctrine did ſo puzzle me, that I could not be at quiet, but addreſſing my ſelf unto Gods word, I found much comfort, and did begin to be ſatisfied that God intended no ſuch matter: And then I challenged him for his doctrine, which he ingeniouſly confeſſed he did deliver, ſaying, *He knew no better way to make our callings and elections ſure, then by ſuch an inquiſition.*

Afterwards I did repair to many Divines, who did ſatisfie me it was thundering doctrine, and did wiſh me to read ſeveral books which I have now lying by me, which do make appear their damnable opinion of *abſolute reprobation*, to be moſt horrid blaſphemy, being againſt the whole Scripture, all the Attributes of God, and our own reaſon; for the books ſay they have no colour of Scripture to maintain it, and there is the whole current of the Scripture againſt them, that Reprobation is a conditional thing, and that men ſhall not be damned for not doing impoſſibilities, as they moſt wickedly affirme they ſhall, which I now ſhall make appear by their opinion.

Since diſcourſing with Mr *Pickering* and Mr *Newton*, they ſay and will maintain as a truth of God, that there is never a ſoul which now lieth damned in hell, nor never a ſoul which ſhall hereafter be damned in hell, could have, or can have whileſt they live here on the earth any poſſible means by Chriſt Jeſus his death, or by the preaching and praying of Miniſters, though the Scriptures ſay, the prayers of the faithful availeth much with God for ſinners; nor yet by all the endeavours that is poſſible the creature can uſe, will any thing avail with God to free themſelves from that place of torment.

And alſo maintain that as God hath ordained the end of the reprobate, which is damnation; ſo hath he ordained the means tending unto their damnation.

Theſe opinions appearing ſo dreadful unto me, I have often ſollicited them how I might hear them preach and pray with any

any comfort; for anſwering me in writing, they are ſo aſhamed of their opinion, that they would never ſet pen to paper for to give the leaſt ſatisfaction; and all the ſumme of their diſcourſe is nothing but this, if a man be not reprobated he ſhall be ſure to have comfort by their preaching; which for my part I think if there be no more ſatisfaction to be given for this ſimple opinion, all you Miniſters may go into your pulpits and tell us ſtories of *Tom an Oaks* and *John a Styles*, and as much good it will do in reſpect of our ſalvations.

I have heard one of them ſhould ſay I were ſo wilful I would not be ſatisfied, whereupon I writ unto them, if they did but give Mr *Smith* and Mr *Mountague*, both Miniſters who are not unknown unto you, ſatisfaction, I would then acknowledge my raſhneſs; but inſtead of giving them ſatisfaction, upon a Sunday, Mr *Newton* having not the fear of God before his eyes, told me a moſt damnable lie of Mr *Smith*, ſaying, he diſavowed my opinion, much wondring at me; I admiring at this change in Mr *Smith*, meeting with him that week, did charge him with it; he profeſſed to me that he did not deny it in the leaſt tittle; but told me, Mr *Pickering* deſired to ſpeak with him; they did meet, and Mr *Pickering* had framed a writing about the opinion, and was very importunate for Mr *Smith* to ſet his hand unto it, which he refuſed to do, telling Mr *Pickering* they were not to preach unto ſtocks and ſtones, but unto rational creatures; as for Mr *Mountague* he denied his ſetting his hand unto Mr *Pickerings* writing alſo, and I ſuppoſe is unmoveable in reſpect of this opinion; now let the world judge if Mr *Newton* did not tell a moſt wilful lie of Mr *Smith*.

A man would much wonder to ſee men quote St *Auguſtine*, Biſhop *Overal*, the Church of *England*, and many others to maintain both ſides opinions, being as much difference as there is betwixt light and darkneſs. I will inſtance in ſome of their ſayings, as they are quoted unto me; Biſh. *Davenant* quotes *Auſtin* in theſe words, Whether ye run, or ſleep, or whether ye receive the word into your hearts, or reject it, yet in the concluſion ye ſhall be ſuch as God who is invincible decreed you ſhou'd be. This ſaith *Davenant*, is a moſt true doctrine, but becauſe in the manner of propounding it ſeemeth to ſeparate the end from

from the means, and invite men unto ſlothfulneſs; therefore as it is moſt true, ſo it is moſt wicked to teach. The other ſide quotes *Auſtin* in theſe words; We abominate the blaſphemy of thoſe who teach that any thing is commanded of God which is impoſſible for man to do; and alſo ſaith, that *Auſtin* ſhall ſpeak ſo plainly and as ſtrongly to maintain reprobation to be a conditional thing, as any man that can be bribed to be an advocate or a witneſs. Biſhop *Davenant* quotes the Church of *England*, and Biſhop *Overall* calling him the judicious Biſhop, to maintain that God by his eternal decree, did give his infallible grace unto ſome for bringing them to glory, which he reſolved not to beſtow unto others which muſt periſh. The other ſide quotes the Church of *England*, ſaying, it is preciſely the judgment of the Church; and quotes Biſhop *Overal* for the interpreting the mind of her articles in this particular, that reprobation is a conditional thing; and ſaying, he was as well able to do it as any man that ever lived; alſo quoting the 2. 7. and 31. Articles to make it good. I will write down the 31 Article; *The oblation of Chriſt once made, is a perfect redemption, propitiation, and ſatisfaction for all the ſins of the whole world, as well original as actuall.* Either thoſe men which I have read on both ſides are miſtaken in their interpretations, or elſe St *Auſtin*, Biſhop *Overall*, and the framers of the Articles of the Church of *England*, and others, were fools and knaves, to write ſuch things for the ſhewing themſelves to be Jack on both ſides; yet I confeſs this wonder may quickly ceaſe, conſidering a Proverb now uſed, that men are not aſhamed in making Gods word a Noſe of Wax for the framing of it unto any faſhion: doubtleſs a man may quote thouſands of places of Scripture, which do evidently make it appear that reprobation is a conditional thing. I will inſtance in but a few, and them I will forbear writing down, knowing who I write unto, as *Deut.* 5.29. *Pſal.* 7. 13. the whole 15 *Pſalme.* and *Pſal.* 81. 14, 15. *Pſal.* 145. 9. *Ezek.* 18. 21. and 33.11. *Hoſea* 13. 9. *Micah* 7.18. *Matth.* 25.41. *Mark* 16.15. *Luke* 13.34. and 19.42. *John* 1.9. and 3.19. *Acts* 17. 30. *Rom.* 14. 15. 1 *Cor* 8. 11. 1 *John* 2.2. 1 *Tim.* 4 6 2 *Pet.* 3 9 now if all theſe places cited do not ſufficiently prove reprobation to be a conditional thing, and

that

that every ſon of *Adam*, eſpecially all thoſe that live under the ſound of the Goſpel are in a capacity of ſalvation, notwithſtanding any decree of God. For my part I do verily believe 'tis not a three penny matter whether Chriſt had ever ſhed any bloud, or whether there were any Scripture or no; and alſo no matter whether ever any Miniſter preach or pray more. This is my belief, if I am in an errour, the Lord help and inſtruct me; for if God hath decreed from all eternity, infallibly to ſave the ſmalleſt part, and infallibly to damn the greateſt part of man-kind; I would fain ſee any rational cauſe given, why all men ſhould be invited to look heaven-ward, when this curſed opinion ſaith, all the Devils in hell cannot keep one of the elect from glory, and all the ſaint-like actions in the world that is poſble for the creature to do, cannot keep one of the reprobates from damnation.

But I thank my God, being of a contrary judgment I do think Chriſt ſhedding his bloud, the Scriptures, and the praying and preaching of Miniſters to be all very neceſſary unto ſalvation.

I hearing Mr *Newton* preach about a moneth ſince, did like his Sermon and Prayer very well, becauſe it did not claſh with the Scripture, but very much with his opinion. I ſent him a Letter, with ſome of the heads of his Sermon and Prayer, adviſing him if he could make it appear that the doctrine of his Sermon and Prayer did not contradict his private judgment, before any rational man, that then I would very willingly ſhake hands with him concerning his opinion: and telling him whereas I had not heard him preach above three or four times for above a twelve moneth; I ſhould hope to be a conſtant hearer of him, and alſo be very ſorry for what I have writ and ſaid againſt him and others formerly; and for the time to come, I ſhould think my ſelf an accurſed of God, if I ſhould continue in that reviling and railing way againſt them; and alſo that I could not go to Church upon any other account, untill I were ſatisfied, then Chriſt bid his Diſciples and the multitude go to hear the Scribes and Phariſees; and doubtleſs I may ſay of theſe men as hereticks and diſſemblers, *Matth.* 23. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *verſ.* what they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do; for they ſay and do not; ſo we may ſay of theſe men being rot-

ten *Calviniſts* in this opinion, and *Arminians* in their Pulpits; for they believe one thing, and ſay clean contrary; ſeveral other reaſons I did give, as my wife being unſatisfied, which was no ſmall trouble unto me; and alſo for the diſciplining of my family in the wayes of God; and how that many of my friends and acquaintance do think me a very factious and diſſenting man, though I could never hear any give any other then a popiſh reaſon, becauſe I will not believe as my Prieſt believes; which belief as yet is non-ſenſe unto me, but all would not prevail with him, neither now nor before, to ſet pen to paper to give me the leaſt ſatisfaction. Now Gentlemen, if you think their opinion to be a truth of God, which for my part as yet I ſay God forbid it ſhould, then my earneſt ſuit unto you is, that all or ſome one of you would do that Chriſtian-like favour as to give me a plain and diſtinct anſwer unto Three Queſtions which I ſhall propoſe: The firſt queſtion is, that God having ordained that the greateſt part of man-kind ſhall certainly periſh for their ſins, not having any means given from above tending unto their ſalvation:

That whether all thoſe ſouls that ſhall ſo periſh are not damn'd for not doing impoſſibilities.

The ſecond queſtion is, they ſay as God hath ordained the end of the reprobates, which is damnation, ſo hath he ordained the means tending unto their damnation:

For this I deſire to know how God can be excuſed from not being called the abſolute Author of ſin, which is blaſphemy of the higheſt degree.

The third queſtion is to give a reaſon why ſhould all ſorts of Miniſters, in very many of their Sermons, be very commonly bawling and crying upon every man, telling us it is our own faults, and for our own wickedneſs God will damn us, and that they have diſcharged their duties in telling us of our ſins, and of the dangerous conſequence that will follow, which is Hell-fire, and ſo perſwading us to repentance and amendment of life, that we may attain everlaſting glory; and ſo we may thank our ſelves for our own damnation, becauſe we would not believe and repent, when their curſed opinion ſtares them in the face, with a lie, that we could not believe and repent, becauſe of

Gods

Gods decree; ſo that now if you pleaſe to make a ſatisfactory anſwer unto theſe three Queſtions here propounded, I am confident both my ſelf and many thouſands more, will have very high thoughts both of your ſelves and alſo of that opinion.

In regard I did make bold with Mr *Smith* and Mr *Montagues* names formerly for to receive ſatisfaction of Mr *Pickering* and Mr *Newton*, it being a buſineſs of ſo high a nature in reſpect of mens ſalvations; I will once more preſume upon their goodneſs, as not to take exceptions that I will nominate them again; and in caſe they do receive ſatisfaction from you in writing within a moneth, I hope that then I ſhall not be ſo refractory, but to acknowledge my raſhneſs.

I do believe I am much envyed by many men of your coats, for the writing ſuch harſh language, concerning Mr *Pickering* and Mr *Newton*, in ſaying if they would not give a ſatisfactory anſwer unto my Letter about this opinion, men would not onely think them a parcel of dunſtical fellows, but alſo judge them a parcel of mercenary Prieſts, more fitting for to keep Hogs then to continue in the Miniſtery, for to befool the people any longer. I confeſs for Mr *Pickerings* part, I could wiſh I had been a little more ſparing; but aſſure your ſelves, I can ſhew cauſe for it; but for Mr *Newtons* part, if it had been five times worſe, he had but his deſerts; but I hope my writing in that language unto them, your charities will be ſuch that you will not refuſe the anſwering of this; in caſe you ſhould, my deſire is, for you to do me the favour in preſenting my ſervice by a Letter unto Dr *Channell*, who in the eſteem of the world is a very eminent knowing man; I do not doubt but he will endeavour to clear this point of conſcience; which I profeſs before Almighty God, there is nothing I aime at more, then to have my minde and conſcience well ſetled, which hath broken more hours of ſleep with me, then every one can imagine; but in caſe none of you will anſwer it, let me deſire this one favour of you, that you wil ſpeedily acquaint Colonel *Morley* with this writing, or ſome other knowing Juſtice of the Peace, that if it do appear I have offended the laws of God, or man, I ſhall deſire no favour; and if I have not offended, I hope they may be as inſtruments for the ſtopping of the mouthes of all ſuch jugling

Teachers: So concludeth he whoſe mite of prayer I hope ſhall never be wanting to be caſt into the treaſury of the Almighty for the peace of Jeruſalem.

Kingſton-Bowſey,
Jan. 26. 1655.

EDWARD CHOUNE.

A Copy of the Anſwer unto this fore written Letter, I received from the Lecturers of Lewis *and* Brighthelmeſton.

Sir,

WE judge it needleſs to anſwer your paper in writing, you have a full anſwer in thoſe who have anſwered your Authors, who ſtrengthen you in your opinions, as in Biſhop *Carleton*, Dr *Featly*, Biſhop *Davenant*, Dr *Kendall*, Dr *Twiſſe*, Dr *Prideaux*, Dr *Ames*; read ſome of theſe with a ſingle eye, pray for underſtanding, if any ſcruple remain, we ſhall at all opportunities by conferring either joyntly or ſeverally, and when you pleaſe clear the truth unto you, provided that you come in the ſpirit of meekneſs; take notice that the truths which you decry as horrid and curſed, are held forth in the publick confeſſions of the Proteſtant Church beyond the Seas, in the Articles of Religion and Confeſſions of Faith of the Church of *England*, whereof you profeſs your ſelf a member; what you utter or write, let it be againſt thoſe, and in their own words, not as you report opinions to render them odious; we paſs over your unchriſtian language, praying the Lord to give you pardon and repentance, and to grant you the ſpirit of truth, who is alſo the ſpirit of meekneſs, that he may lead you into all truth; caſting down your reaſonings, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt, to whoſe grace you are commended by your well wiſhing friends,

The Lecturers of Lewis *and* Brighthelmſton.

I received this the 12 *of* March, 1655. *they ſending it without dating.*

A Copy of the Answer unto this Letter before written.

Sirs,

I Received a thing like a Letter, with no mans hand unto it, wherein you judge my Paper sent unto you concerning *absolute reprobation*, needless to be answered, in regard some learned Bishops and Doctors have answered my Authors fully as you say; wishing me to read their works with a single eye, and then if any scruple arise, if I come unto you with the spirit of meekness, you would by conference cleer the truth; for what I have read, and heard, of Bishop *Davenant*, Doctor *Twisse*, and Doctor *Prideaux*, it hath more confirmed and strengthened me in my opinion then otherwise; it is above a year since that I did first speak and write unto many of you upon several Christian considerations, to give me some satisfaction; and now at the last you have sent me a piece of Paper, which is little better worth then to wipe ones breech, for any satisfaction I can see in it. Now if this be all the advice you can give me, let me desire you, all that writ unto me, for to accept of the same advice from me: In the first place, with an honest and conscientious heart read the word of God: *Austin* and *Tertullian* being quoted unto me, I will also put you in mind of their sayings: *Austin* saith you must not contradict plain places of Scripture, because your shallow brains cannot comprehend the obscure: *Tertullian* saith, A few testimonies must receive an exposition answerable unto the current of the Scriptures, not contrary: And as Mr. *Pierce* saith, Is there no other way to understand those Texts in *Rom.* 9. then to make those Texts which sound severely, to clash with those that sound compassionately? let us not do so, having a thousand compassionate plain places of Scripture, unto one harsh and obscure: read also Bishop *Montague*, and he will tell you that you swerve from the Church of *England*, in maintaining your erroneous point of *absolute reprobation*; one of my Authors quoted Bishop *Overal* in his interpretation of the 39. Articles, who saith the maintenance of *absolute reprobation* is precisely against the judgement

of

of the Church of *England*, pray read alſo Biſhop *Harſnets* Sermon on *Ezek* 33. *v.* 11. which will tell you your blaſphemous opinion is grown high & monſtrous, that it is like unto *Goliah* that men tremble and ſhake at it, and no man reacheth his hand to *Davids* ſling to caſt it down, but in the name of the Lord of hoſts we will encounter it, for it hath not reviled the hoſt of the living God, but the God of hoſts: read alſo Doctor *Jacksons Treatiſe on Gods attributes*: Doctor *Hammonds Fundamentals*, who will tell you, that your opinion is againſt the judgement of the Church of *England*; read Doctor *Potters* Apology, Mr. *Goodwin* his agreement and diſtance of the brethren, read alſo *Haggars* Stoicks, and *Moulamb* on *Rom.* 9. and many other books, but beyond all compare let me commend unto you Mr. *Hoord* and Mr. *Piercy*'s books, for I believe they have ſo ſufficient y maintained that doctrine againſt your blaſphemous opinion, as they call it, of *abſolute reprobation*, both by Scripture, by Antiquity, and by Reaſon, that the wit of man is not able to give any conſiderable anſwer by Scripture, by Antiquity, by Reaſon to gain-ſay it; doubtleſs theſe men will give you ſatisfaction if any ſcruple do ariſe. My deſire is that any two of you Lecturers will give me a meeting, five, ten, or twenty miles from home, and I will meet you, and by Gods help will give you better ſatisfaction for the maintenance of my opinion, then ever I received from any of you againſt it, provided you will come with an humble ſpirit, keeping cloſe unto the Scriptures, and caſt away all carnall inventions; but to meet a multitude, I will not be baited at, or for fear I may be jugled out of my wits by ſuch a company: you would have me alſo utter and write againſt the Proteſtants beyond the Seas, and the Framers of the Articles of the Church of *England*. And in their words, for the greateſt part of the Proteſtants beyond the Sea, holds againſt your wretched opinion, as I have been well ſatisfied, and will ſooner cloſe with the Papiſts in reſpect of their religion then with your ſelves; as for the Church of *England*, the framers of the Articles, have left them in ſuch a dubious way, that ſome Biſhops, and Doctors, and other inferiour Miniſters do interpret the Articles abſolutely againſt that horrid point of *abſolute reprobation*, and ſome Biſhops

ſhops, Doctors, and other inferiour Miniſters do interpret the ſame articles, making abſolute reprobation a truth of God, juſt as they do the Scripture, framing it unto any faſhion or ſhape. Now if this be a truth, as you maintain, that God by his eternal and unalterable decree, hath elected the ſmalleſt part of mankind infallibly unto glory, and reprobated the greateſt part of man-kind unto damnation; I would fain hear any rational man give a reaſon, why it ſhould be an errour in me for ſaying, I would not give three pence a dozen for all the Biſhops, Doctors, and other inferiour Miniſters in Chriſtendome, unleſs I had a commiſſion to ſell them to the great Turk; and alſo for my wondering that our forefathers ſhould ſo unadviſedly ſuffer theſe drones to ſuck ſo much of the good of the land, as allowing in all places the Tenth of the Revenues, and in many places to my knowledg at this day they enjoy the ſixth part of the Revenues of the land; and beyond ſea amongſt the Papiſts, as I have read, all ſorts of their droniſh Clergy enjoy almoſt half of the revenues of their lands; now if this be a truth of God, what is the Prieſts work, both here and beyond ſea, but onely to enſlave mens conſciences whileſt they live here on earth? and I would fain ſee any judicious man who renounceth his believing, becauſe his Prieſt believes it, to give a ſatisfactory anſwer, why ſo many bagpipe players as there are Prieſts, which may be competently maintained with an hundredth part of the Prieſts charge, may not do God and man as good ſervice in reſpect of mens ſalvation, to keep one merry day in a week, let it be Sunday or any other day, either in this Nation or in any other part of the world; provided that that judicious man ſhall grant that which all you maintain, that is, that all the Devils in Hell cannot keep one of the Elect from glory; neither Chriſt Jeſus, nor all the Saint-like actions in the world that is poſſible for the creature to do, can keep one of the reprobates from damnation; this being granted, if I am in an errour, I have a longing deſire to be convinced by Scripture and reaſon. I have already written to you under my hand, which opinion I ſuppoſe you maintain, becauſe I never heard from you, that I had belied you in the leaſt degree: as for rendring your opinion odious, and for giving the maintainers of it, that

true

true character of juglers; I am very confident I cannot do God greater ſervice then by ſo doing, as long as you maintain one thing privately, and preach publickly clean contrary; you write that you will paſs by my unchriſtian language, and will pray unto the Lord for my pardon and repentance: For my unchriſtian language, I know of none I uſed towards you, unleſs you will acknowledge it is unchriſtian language, to call blaſphemers, Jeſuites, Jews, or Turks, by the names of diſſemblers, or juglers; if you do, then I muſt confeſs I have touched your copyholds. For your prayers, I am not ſenſible I have ſinned againſt the moſt high in that particular; therfore my advice is unto you, as Chriſt ſaid unto the daughters of *Jeruſalem, weep for your ſelves*; I know the Apoſtle tells us, *the prayer of the faithfull availeth much with God for ſinners*; but I believing your ſelves not to be of that number, as long as you continue in that curſed opinion, I will as ſoon ſue unto the Pope, or to the great Turk for their prayers, as for yours. Thus deſiring the Almighty to open the eyes of our underſtandings, both of your ſelves and my ſelf, and all other people of what Religion ſoever, that we may clearly ſee thoſe things that belong unto our peace, before that peace be taken from us, or we taken from it, and be no more ſeen. So reſteth him that is no well-willer unto your opinion, and not aſhamed to ſet my hand for the maintenance of my own.

EDWARD CHOUNE.

Kingſton-Bowſey,
March 24. 1655.

I am aſſured you will not find two lines more then in the original Letters.

IT is above a twelve moneth ſince I did write both theſe Letters, I have ſeveral times ſollicited for Mr *Pickering* and one Miniſter more, with two or three Laicks, to give me a meeting, and I to have one Miniſter, with two or three men anſwerable more,

more, they refuſe, ſaying, if I come onely, what good they can they will do, but will have nothing to do with others.

About four or five moneths ſince, Mr *Newton* the Miniſter of my pariſh did recant his blaſphemous opinion before my Brother *Bray Choune*, and my Brother *John Choune* and my ſelf; they being both at my houſe, we all went to hear him preach; after the Sermon they were much troubled there ſhould be ſuch a difference betwixt the Miniſter and my ſelf in our judgment, ſuppoſing it to be, for want of a right underſtanding, there having been ſome diſtance in affection betwixt my Brother *Bray* and my ſelf about this judgment, in oppoſing the Miniſters. I was very importunate with him to ſend for Mr *Newton* over, living but croſs the way, and ſo to endeavour a reconciliation; he did come over, and after ſome diſcourſe, in concluſion did own theſe following words.

I believe all Chriſtians may be ſaved, quitting the corruption of their own nature, which is not impoſſible to do; provided they follow thoſe means which God hath appointed; which means are attainable, in caſe it be not mans own fault, there being no decree of God to the contrary.

To this his recantation I have both my Brothers hands.

At the writing of this opinion, he did ſay he did own it, and alſo promiſed that he would preſently ſet his hand unto it; I anſwered, if he would, I would preſently burn before their faces all manner of writing, concerning our difference; and that if he would not ſwerve from theſe particulars in his preaching, nor after by his opinion, I would cut off a piece of my tongue rather then revile him for keeping unto this opinion: he conſidering of it, did ſay for the preſent he would not ſet his hand unto it, but ſaid he did owne every word of it, but would take ſome farther time for the ſetting his hand unto it, and ſo we parted, he taking this his opinion along with him in writing to conſider of: Since which time he came over unto my houſe, but refuſed to ſet his hand to the above-ſaid opinion, which he formerly owned, before my brothers and my ſelfe as aforeſaid, and diſcourſing with him did find him like the dog unto the vomit, or the waſhed ſow into the wallowing in the mire, returne againe unto the maintaining of his old blaſphemous opinion of

abſolute reprobation as formerly, how that Chriſt dyed for none but the Elect, and how that the greateſt part of Man-kind ſhall moſt certainly periſh, having no meanes left them for their ſalvation; that their preaching and praying onely concernes the Elect. I have asked them, Wherefore all thoſe ſouls which are in hell, and ſhall goe to hell, are damned? Their mouthes are ſo ſtopped, that they can ſay, For nothing but *Adams* ſin; for which they have no colourable Scripture to maintaine, as ever I heard of; onely they pretend *Rom.*5. will maintain them, but ſo poorly, that it cannot hold water; and men of an ordinary capacity muſt eaſily conclude it a piece of non-ſenſe; for in the 18. and 19. verſes of the ſame Chapter, the ſame all that were condemned in *Adam*, the ſame all were juſtified in Chriſt, and the ſame many as were made ſinners through the diſobedience of *Adam*, the ſame many ſhall be made righteous by the obedience of Chriſt. And he alſo wretchedly maintaines according unto a blaſphemous Marginal note on *Deut.*2. 30. that as God hath appointed the end of the reprobate, which is damnation; ſo hath he appointed the means tending to their damnation; notwithſtanding a man cannot hear one Sermon of ten but the whole drift of their Sermons runs clean contrary againſt this their odious opinion.

A man would admire that thoſe Miniſters that hold this curſed opinion of *abſolute reprobation*, ſhould not bluſh, tremble, and quake, for fear of ſome preſent judgment from the all-knowing God, for telling of ſo many palpable lies in moſt of their Sermons they preach, as ſaying, *God would have all to be ſaved*; and how God ſwears by his life *he doth not deſire the death of a ſinner*; how mournfully he wiſheth it, *O that my people would have hearkened, that it might go well with them and their children for ever*: And Chriſt came to ſave the greateſt of ſinners, and how he wept over *Jeruſalem* bemoaning them, ſaying, *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how oft would I have gathered you together, as a hen doth her chickens, and ye would not?* How the greateſt of ſinners have found mercy, as *David*, *Manaſſeh*, *Peter*, and many others, and how Chriſt was a general Saviour, as *Paul* ſaith, who was not a reconciliation for our ſins onely, but for the ſins of the whole world. I ſay let any man deny this if he

he can; if this be not the ordinary way of preaching, in ſtuffing their Sermons with the free and univerſal mercies of God unto the ſons of men, and how that alwayes in the method of Gods dealing with the greateſt of ſinners, he is ſo unwilling that any ſoul ſhould periſh; that he will ſtill have his inſtruction go before his deſtruction; ſo that if the creature would but ſeek and knock, God is ſo gracious that he upbraids no man; they might both find and have the gate of heaven opened unto them, for they are ſent as Ambaſſadours from Chriſt to this purpoſe, for to proclaim theſe rich mercies unto the world, and to entreat us to be born again, for the preventing of our ſouls damnation, and are not onely ſent to proclaim theſe rich mercies, but are alſo ſent to aſſure us, we may have all our ſoules ſaved, if we will not now reject theſe preſent offers of grace; but if we will not believe and repent, the Lord will require our bloud at our own hands, for they have diſcharged their duties, in telling us of our ſins, and of the dangerous conſequence which will follow. Now this is one, I ſay, of the great things, which doth daily trouble my thoughts, to ſee theſe Miniſters which are ſent, as they ſay, Ambaſſadours from Chriſt, to proclaim theſe precious Goſpel truths, as before written; which without doubt they are ſo; and yet privately to maintain ſuch a diametrically oppoſite, and contradictory opinion, which is ſuch a gallimafry, that no rational man can tell what to make of it, for to my knowledge, notwithſtanding thoſe rich mercies above written, which they are ſent to proclaim, yet they privately maintain, *that there is never a ſoul in hell, nor any hereafter that ſhall go to hell, but that God from all eternity did bar them from all his mercies; that Chriſt ſhed not one drop of bloud for them; that Miniſters prayers and preaching doth not concern them; that all the Saint-like actions that is poſſible for them to do, all will not avail with God to free them, or any one of them, from that place of torment.*

Surely if men were not altogether bewitched unto their Prieſts, right or wrong, they might eaſily diſcern with half an eye moſt ſordid contradictions, and alſo confeſs that there cannot be greater impoſtors, juglers, call them what you will, in any religion amongſt the Papiſts, Jews, or Turks, then

theſe men are, which would be accounted the onely Zelots of the Nation. For my part I do much wonder that all men which ſtand in the preſence of God to hear them, do not ſtand amazed to ſee this their abominable wickedneſs, in their offering all men ſalvation conditionally, when their damnation is determined abſolutely, as appears by their curſed opinion.

Which damn'd opinion cuts aſunder the very ſinews of religion, encourageth prophaneneſs, draws away the ſtrongeſt enducements unto a holy life; roots up virtue, plants vice, leaves no place for reward or puniſhment; for by this curſed opinion all our actions and ends are faſtned at the foot of Gods chair, leaving us nothing to do, but onely to obey our own fates, to follow the duct of the Stars, or neceſſity of thoſe Iron chaines we are born under, our end is pitched, therefore we may ſit down and take our eaſe, and wait what the Lord will do unto us, for we have our ſuperſedeas.

I will ſet down the judgment of four or five Authors in their own words, for the maintenance of univerſal redemption, which being againſt their abominable doctrine of Chriſts dying onely for the elect; the firſt Author is Biſhop *Latimer*, I hope he is authentick, becauſe he was burn'd for his Religion in Queen *Maries* dayes; he ſayes in a Sermon of his preached in *Lincolnſhire*, it is no more but to believe, and hath not Chriſt ſhed as much bloud for *Judas* as he did for *Peter*? *Peter* believed and was ſaved, *Judas* would not believe and was condemned: and in another Sermon of his ſaith, The preaching of the Goſpel is univerſal, it appertaineth to all man-kind through the whole earth, their ſound is heard, and that there is no man ſo wicked, but he may have a remedy for his ſalvation.

The ſecond Author is Biſhop *Hooper*, who died alſo a holy Martyr in queen *Mary*'s dayes, being againſt them; ſome part of his ſayings being alſo for the maintenance of Univerſall Redemption, as God accounted in *Adams* ſin, all mankind being in his loynes, worthy death, ſo accounted in Chriſt, or to be ſaved from death; all thoſe promiſes that appertained unto the ſalvation of *Adam* and his poſterity were made in Chriſt, and for Chriſt onely, and appertained to our Fathers and us, as we appertained to Chriſt, *He is the door, the way, and the life, he is the onely Mediatour between God and man, without whom no man can come to the father Celeſtiall*, John

1.3,6.

1.3,6. The vertue and ſtrength of Gods promiſe extendeth as far to ſave man, as the rigour and juſtice of the Law for ſin to damn man. *Rom.*5.17.18. *For by the offence and ſin of one man death was extended and made common to all men unto condemnation*, as *Paul* ſaith; ſo by the juſtice of the one is derived life unto all men to juſtification: as we were in *Adam*, and partakers of his ill, ſo we were in him when God made him a promiſe of grace, and partakers of the ſame grace. Not, as the children of *Adam*, but as the children of the Promiſe; & the as ſins of *Adam* without priviledge or exception, extended and appertained unto all *Adams*, and every of *Adams* poſterity; ſo did his promiſe of Grace generally appertain, as well to every and ſingular of *Adams* poſterity, as to *Adam*, as it is more plainly expreſſed, *Gen.*15.4,5. and 17.1. where God promiſeth to bleſs in the ſeed of *Abraham* all the people of the world. Saint *Paul* maketh no diverſity in Chriſt, of Jew nor Gentile, as *Galat.* 3.28. *Col.*3.11. Further Saint *Paul* doth by collation of *Adam* and Chriſt, Sin and Grace, thus interpret Gods promiſe, and maketh not Chriſt inferiour to *Adam*, nor Grace unto Sin: and likewiſe Chriſt ſaith, *That the gate is ſtrait that leadeth to life, and few enter.* Thus the Scripture anſwereth, That the promiſe of Grace appertaineth to every ſort of men in the world, and comprehendeth them all. Howbeit within certain limits and bounds, the which if men neglect or paſs over, they exclude themſelves from the promiſe in Chriſt, as *Cain* was no more excluded, till he excluded himſelf, then *Abel*; *Saul* then *David*; *Judas* then *Peter*; *Eſau* then *Jacob*: by the Scripture it ſeemeth that the Sentence of God was given to ſave the one, and damn the other, before the one loved God, or the other hated God; howbeit theſe threatnings of God againſt *Eſau*, if he had not of his wilfull malice excluded himſelf from the promiſe of Grace, ſhould no more hinder his ſalvation, then Gods threatnings againſt *Ninive*, Jonas 1.2. which notwithſtanding that God ſaid ſhould be deſtroyed within forty dayes, ſtood a great time after, and did penance; *Eſau* was circumciſed and preſented unto the Church of God by his Father in all externall ceremonies as well as *Jacob*; the Sentence of God unto *Rebecah* was not in the fault, that *Eſau* his life and converſation was not agreeable unto

to

to justice and equity as *Jacobs*, but his own malice, for there is mentioned nothing at all in that place that *Esau* was disinherited of eternall life, but that he should be inferiour to his Brother *Jacob* in this world, as the Prophet *Malac.* chap. 1. makes it appeare, who saith S. *Paul* useth this example of *Jacob* and *Esau* in *Rom.9* for none other purpose, but to take away from the Jews the thing that they most put their trust in, to lay the vaine hope they had in their carnall lineage and naturall descent from the family and household of *Abraham*, and likewise the false confidence they had in the keeping of the Law of *Moses*: *Pauls* whole purpose is in this Epistle, to bring Man unto the knowledge of his sin, and to shew him how he may be remitted. He also speaking of severall impediments which hinder us from keeping of Gods Law, men will not returne from their evill and licentious wayes by repentance, but mount straight wayes into Gods Providence; searching the privities and secrets of God, which were never made known unto Man, or Angel: and in another place the Bishop saith, our Gospellers are better learned then the holy Ghost, for they wickedly attribute the cause of punishment and adversity to Gods providence, which is the cause of no ill, as he himself can do no ill: and of every mischief that is done, they say, it was Gods will. The Holy Ghost putteth another cause, that is to say, sin in man, and contempt of his holy word; further, the pain is not inflicted by predestination to loose man, but both predestination and the affliction extend to call man from damnation. The blind Sooth-sayers that write of things to come, are more to be esteemed then these curious and high-climbing wits; for they attribute the cause of ill to the ill aspects and sinister conjunctions of the Planets. Also he saith, the commands of God are easie to be observed, we need not sail to the *Indies* with danger of our lives for it; he saith no man is so cruel but he may wax meek if he give a willing ear to discipline; all men are bound to know upon pain of damnation the Articles of their faith, to know God in Christ, the ten Commandments, for to know what works to do, and what to leave undone; and also the *Pater noster*, Christs prayer, which is an Abridgment, Epitome, or a compendious Collection of all the Psalms and Prayers written in the whole Scri-

Scripture, in which thou prayeſt for the remiſſion of ſins, as well for thy ſelf as for all others, deſireſt the grace of the holy Ghoſt to preſerve thee in virtue, giveſt thanks for the goodneſs of God towards thee and all others: he that knoweth leſs then this, cannot be ſaved; and he that knoweth no more then this, if he follow his knowledge cannot be damned.

The third Author is Dr. *Hammond* in his *Fundamentals*, who p. 130. ſaith, That Chriſt dying for none but the Elect, it is aſſerted without any pretence or colour of Scripture-proof, nay, in oppoſition to as plain diſtinct affirmations as can be produced for any Article of the Creed, and ſaith that Chriſts dying for all is the expreſs doctrine of the Scripture; concludes that *ch.*14.*p.*144. as neceſſary as hope is to labour, encouragement to quickening of action, ſo neceſſary is the belief of univerſal redemption to the ſuperſtructing of Chriſtian life.

The fourth Author is Mr. *Pierce* in his vindication of ſome notes concerning Gods decrees, written this very year *p.*85. ſaith treating of the error of Chriſts dying onely for the Elect, that it is a pernicious hereſie, being contrary to Scripture, and the cleareſt Scriptures that can be named; for univerſal redemption is exhibited to us in Scripture, by all expreſſions of univerſal which the tongue of Men and Angels is poſſibly able to expreſs, he concludes his 23. *Sect.* of his third *Chapter:* the adverſary diſclaiming this error of Chriſts dying only for the elect, all the reſt will tumble of their own accord. The fifth Author is Mr *Sanders* in his book, *Gods love manifeſted unto all men*, p. 161. ſaith, they that teach Chriſt died onely for a few, take away the true Goſpel and ground of faith, and do introduce a falſe Goſpel which affords men no grounds to believe. I have read ſeveral Authors which maintain we ſhall not be damn'd for original ſin; and they ſay themſelves that *Adam* the great offender was certainly ſaved. I have heard Mr *Hugh Peters* himſelf preach, Let men talk what they will, ſaid he, that in his judgment the pain of loſs in reſpect of hell fire, which loſs was the being deprived of the preſence of God and his Angels, would be greater then the pain of ſenſe. Now *Sanders* ſaith, *pag.*60. and *p.*79. no man ſhall ever periſh for *Adams* ſin; I ſpeak of this in anſwer to Mr *Peters* judgment; for ſaith *Sanders*, if thoſe that

that periſh, had not ſufficient of means afforded them to life and happineſs there can be no pain of loſs, but rather comfort themſelves, that their miſery was unavoidable, and ſo ſaith he the caſe would be ſtill alike, for they were loſt before they were borne, and therefore no more to blame themſelves, then an heir hath reaſon to blame himſelf, becauſe his father ſpent his inheritance before he was borne: it would rejoyce my heart to ſee theſe Authors well anſwered by Scripture and Reaſon; I could inſtance in many Authors more, but I will forbeare, onely commend the Reader to Mr *Hoards* book called *Gods love to Mankind*, who will tell thee their wretched opinion is contrary unto Gods nature, the Scripture, and ſound reaſon: who will tell thee it overthroweth all Religion, and how it makes God a meer deluder, and his Miniſters falſe witneſſes, for they offer unto men ſalvation conditionally, whoſe damnation is determined abſolutely, and how it maketh the whole circle of a mans life nothing but a meer deſtiny.

In a word, read but his book twice over, and then if thou art not too much byaſſed, in beleeving as the Prieſt beleeves, right or wrong, Pope-like, I am very confident thou wilt doe as I my ſelfe am reſolved, never to reverence theſe *Reprobatarians* more, untill ſuch time they will better ſatisfie me by Scripture and reaſon for the maintenance of their moſt impious opinion.

Beſides what I have read, I do believe I have diſcourſed with thouſands of people, ſome of them Doctors of Divinity, and many of them Miniſters, and very many of them, in the eſteem of the world, have been a preciſe, religious, knowing ſort of people for the moſt part, have concluded with me that their opinion of *abſolute reprobation*, they holding of it as aforeſaid, is a moſt damnable, erroneous, blaſphemous opinion: ſaying, if a truth of God, no matter for Miniſters, nor the Scriptures, nor for Chriſt Jeſus his coming. Notwithſtanding it doth appear, both by Scripture and the learned, that the whole body of Divinity turns on this hinge, and no matter for any religion, if that be a truth of God; yet I have been deeply cenſured by many of my friends for being ſo ſingular in the oppoſing and reviling thoſe Miniſters which maintain it.

Now

Now in regard I ſee very few Miniſters will ſtand in the gap to oppoſe them, for fear of loſing their Bacon, or their noble Tithes; and other men, they do not care for troubling themſelves, deſiring to live quietly: my anſwer ſhall be *Luther*'s own words, as he is quoted in the Book of Martyrs, when he alone appeared againſt the Papiſts, many of his friends perſwaded him to be ſilent for fear ſome temporal perſecution ſhould be inflicted on him, his anſwer was, ſaying, *If there were as many Divels in the town of* Wormes *in* Germany, *as there were tiles on the houſes, yet he would appear in that cauſe.*

This cauſe having much more need for another *Luther* to appear then ever the other had, and yet there be but very few dare ſhew themſelves in this great work; therefore by Gods help, I will with my very ſmall abilities, appear to the utmoſt of my power in this cauſe, until ſuch time as I am convinced by Scripture and Reaſon, and then I ſhall moſt willingly lie down at their feet.

I confeſs ſome have ſeemingly reproved me for uſing paſſionate expreſſions in the forewritten letters, as they ſay, in calling the Miniſters jugling Prieſts, and ſaying they are more fitting to keep hoggs then to continue in the Miniſtery, and ſuch like words: but doubtleſs no Chriſtian upon due conſideration, can think there is any paſſion uſed; in regard they are ſuch blaſphemers, in making God the Author of ſin; for they ſay, *As God hath ordained the end of the Reprobate, which is damnation; ſo hath he ordained the means tending therennto:* by which plain words, let the world judge if they do not make God the Author of all ſins.

But many of theſe men that I have to deal withall, are meer ſhuttle-cocks, ſaying one thing to day, and denying it to morrow, eſpecially Prieſt *Newton* to my knowledge; therefore look on the Marginal notes on *Deut.* 2. and v. 30. there you ſhall find thoſe very blaſphemous words above written, of Gods appointing the means unto the end; which I ſuppoſe was done by their *Geneva* brethren,

and unto this purpose if you will but look into those cursed Authors *Zanchius*, *Crowly*, and *Knox*, they will tell you, all those who are, or shall be damned, are necessarily damn'd, and that by Gods predestination we are compelled to do those things for which we shall be damned. Reverend *Calvin* himself, as some call him, but for my part I think if all his works were answerable unto this most abominable and blasphemous expression, his title onely deserves *Calvin* Sir Reverence, where he saith, *lib.* 1. *c.* 17. §. 11. *That the wicked are not onely bound in fetters, but are guided by Gods bridle to do all manner of their wicked actions.* Many such damnable expressions of such wicked Authors I have lying by me, but I will forbear.

Some men have imagined that I was set on by some Jesuit, or some other wicked men, or else distracted, or else I would not so violently oppose those cursed *Reprobatarians*; doubtless it had been no sin against God or man, if thousands had joyned with me in this nature for the opposing such a diveilish heresie. I suppose the very style of this writing will so clear the business, that no Scholar had any hand in it; but I protest in the presence of that God before whom I write this, that never any man did dictate one line unto me what I should write, either now, or whatever I did write before, nor ever gave me any encouragement to oppose them in this nature. If ever I do suffer any temporal punishment for these my own actions, I will give you four unanswerable reasons which moved me unto it: The first reason is Gods word, which will be an unquestionable evidence for the clearing of me at the last day. The second reason, my reading of many eminent mens works upon that subject which concur with the Scriptures: The third reason, several conferences I have had with many Godly well disposed Christians, which have agreed with me in this judgment: The fourth and last reason is, my own conscience, which I make no doubt of but will prove a continual feast unto me.

As for my being distracted, I never did know my temporal

ral judgment in a better condition, bleſſed be that God who is the onely continuer of it, and I ſuppoſe I have not given any of my acquaintance cauſe to think the contrary.

As for my comfortable aſſurance of my eternal welfare, I can boldly ſpeak it, if I were now at this inſtant to give an account for all my wicked actions, I do verily believe that my gracious God is not in the leaſt degree angry with me for any thing I have ſaid or written againſt thoſe Miniſters which maintain that blaſphemous opinion of *abſolute reprobation*; but I have great cauſe to think rather that my gracious God doth very much own theſe my undertakings; and I do alſo verily believe in reſpect of my ſouls ſalvation, I am at this preſent writing, and have been ever ſince the fortunate difference betwixt the Parſon and my ſelf brake out, in a more bleſſed condition then I was before for a long time.

I will draw towards a concluſion, with a learned mans character of the Clergy in general; his book is called *The Modern Policy*, to be ſold at the *George* in *Fleet-ſtreet*, a little book about eight pence price.

I confeſs I ſhall rove from the ſubject in hand, onely I will make ſome uſe of it by way of application; I have not read in this book very lately, yet I will not add one line more then his own words; he ſaith, it much pierceth his heart to ſee the Clergy in ſuch a high degree acceſſary to the civil diſtempers, how they have every where ſhaken the foundations both of Church and ſtate; and how it hath been obſerved that there hath been no cloud of miſery, but did ſpring from, or at leaſt, was much ſwelled by their holy water: ſaith he, I have ſearched the Evangelical records, and there was nothing but milde and ſoft doctrines; I enquired into the breathings of the Spirit, and they were pacificatory; I wondered from what preſidents and Scripture-encouragements theſe men deduced their practiſes; and at laſt was forced to conclude

that they were only pretended chaplaines unto the Prince of peace; it is hard to find in any place any tragical scene or bloudy Theatre, but a Jesuite or some stone-Priest hath had a part in it. He also, saith the Politician, must nourish some mercenary Jesuite or other Divines to cry up their aimes in their Churches, that so the poyson may insinuate more generally into all; for the sharpest sword in his Army cannot vie services with his subtil quill: and so we may see those torches that should have been for saving light, were degenerated into fire-brands; those trumpets that should have sounded retreats to popular furies, knew no other musick but martiall allarums. I confess I have both read and discoursed with many of the same judgment, but until within these two or three years, I was very unwilling to entertain such vile thoughts of them; but now I confess if this plain English be a truth of God, which those I write against maintain it to be; that is to say, all the Devils in hell could not keep any of those which are in heaven from that place, nor shall be any hindrance to any of those that shall be hereafter received into that place of glory; nor Christ Jesus, Ministers praying and preaching, nor all the Saint-like actions that are possible for the Creature to do, could keep any of those which are in hell, nor can keep any of those which shall hereafter go into hell from that place of torment, (if this be a truth) then I verily believe the character the learned man gives as aforesaid of the Clergy, may be as true as the Gospel, they having nothing to do for to imploy their wits on but on such devillish designs; but for my part believing their opinion to be one of the Devils truths; for indeed it is impossible for the Devil to be a deceiver, if their opinion be a truth of God; therefore I hope to have more honourable thoughts of those Clergy which discovered that hellish opnion. Though I confess to my knowledge many of them ought to have a slash provided for them, because they will not shew themselves in this great work for the opposing of such a devillish heresie; and very many Ministers have abominated this opi-

nion.

nion unto me in such like termes, and yet all the reason they can give to excuse their silence, is only, as I said before, for fear they should lose their Bacon. O sad, sad, sad are these miserable times we live in! but I hope yet in Gods good time we shall have a through reformation; for doubtless as in the 106. *Psalm*, were there not some *Moses*'s that did stand in the breach to stop the fury of the Lord, many may expect the same judgment which was inflicted on *Dathan* and *Abiram*, for this their most damnable opinion. There have many eminent men for learning and piety, both formerly and lately shewed themselves in print for the opposing of this heresie; and I doubt not but many more will appear in this great work, not onely to reprove the Reprobatarian Ministery, but also other Ministers which are of the contrary judgment, and yet think themselves to be Gods labourers, though they will not appear in Gods vineyard to do the work of the Lord, which doubtless is to inveigh in their pulpits against those wicked Reprobatarians in the bittereſt language which can be invented, which may prove under God to be the onely means for the suppressing this most damnable and most blasphemous heresie. Although I am my self but a Farmer, and was never since I was 14 years of age capable of any better preferment; yet I would most willingly ride 500 miles, and spend or give 100 l. upon some charitable use, that this Nation were well satisfied concerning this heretical opinion, which is so stifly maintained by Mr *Newton* the Presbyterian Priest of my parish, and other men of that stamp; and so farewell.

FINIS.